

WLBT/WJDX Radio Broadcast

Live Report from Oxford, Mississippi:
University of Mississippi Campus Riots in response to Meredith registration

September 30, 1962

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
Post Office Box 571
Jackson., Mississippi 39205

AU/MP 1980.01.105

Participant(s): Allen, Chuck
 Bingham, Cliff

Title: Live Report from Oxford, Mississippi: University of Mississippi
 Campus Riots in response to Meredith registration, September
 30, 1962

0:05 – 0:20	[White noise]
0:21 – 0:29	[unintelligible] Pardon?
0:30 – 0:33	Is tape rolling?
0:34 – 0:35	Yeah, go anytime
0:36 – 0:39	This is for broadcast, this is for broadcast.....
0:41 – 0:50	
CHUCK ALLEN:	This is Chuck Allen of the WLBT/WJDX Remote unit at the University Avenue entrance to the University of Mississippi campus at Oxford.
0:51 – 01:10	In the last few minutes, the passage of traffic has been normal here at the University Avenue entrance. The highway patrolmen are still stopping cars asking for identification. The press is admitted to the campus as has been reported previously by us.
1:11 – 1:22	The press is now admitted to the campus. The campus radio station is broadcasting asking the students to stay in their rooms to maintain dignity and decorum.
1:22 – 1:34	The member of the student government said that he has spoke...spoken with Chancellor Williams and that Meredith will be registered.
1:34 – 1:52	It is said that he will be registered tomorrow. This confirms a report that we have had that came by way of Jackson, incidentally, from the editor of the campus newspaper saying, that Meredith was on the campus. That he was with the federal marshals and he would be registered tomorrow since this was Sunday.
1:53 – 2:19	WJDX decks [?] WLBT reporter and cameramen are on the campus at the moment I was at the Lyceum building myself some 20 or 30 minutes ago the crowd of students at the Lyceum building was still being held from going into the building itself by a ring of federal marshals equipped with helmets with tear gas guns held at the ready position
2:20– 2:39	and with the vests containing the tear gas shells highway patrolmen are also in this same condun [?] and no-one enters the lyceum building at this time. The building itself, when I was there, was dark except for lights on the third floor and in the hall of the first floor.
2:40 – 2:59	The flow of passenger traffic has not been as great as you might expect. A good many co-eds, a good many students have come out of the university itself and are here at the entrance to the...University Avenue entrance to the

campus.

3:00 – 3:18	The WDSU mobile videotape unit has just left the campus. It came on the campus, some five minutes after we were on it and they have left. The scene now is watch and wait again, as has been the case as has been so many times in the Meredith case.....
03:21 – 3:37	As further events develop. We will report them to you from our vantage point here in Oxford. This is Chuck Allen reporting for WLBT/WJDX. That's all at this moment from... the University of Mississippi.
3:37 – 3:48	[No dialogue]
03:48 – 03:51	Come in F2, this is F1, Come in F2
03:52 – 03:55	We're not on the campus, Chuck, we're coming back right now.
03:55 – 03:57	10-4. Cliff just got back.
30:59 – 04: 00	He just got back? We just saw him a second ago.
04:01 – 04:02	They just drove in.
04:03 – 04:06	[unintelligible]
04:07 – 04: 10	Chuck [?] NBC is reporting a near riot up there right now
04:11 – 04:13	[unintelligible]
04:14 – 04:17	Say again please, say again please.
04:19 – 04:26	NBC is now reporting a near riot on the campus. Beating up newsmen, et cetera.
04:27 – 04:39 ALLEN:	Alright get the tape recorder working and I'll give you the story on that...I, I'll give it to you. I didn't want it to...As far as I know I can give it to you. Cliff is here too.....
04:42 – 04:45	The administration
04:45 – 04:50	[Dead noise]
04:51 – 04: 54 TECHNICIAN:	All right, Chuck, you can go now any time you want.

05:02 – 05:03

ALLEN: This is.....

05:03 – 05:05

[Dead noise]

05:05 – 05:20

This is Chuck Allen reporting from the WJDX/WLBT remote unit located at the University Avenue entrance to the University of Mississippi campus here at, in Oxford. With me is Cliff Bingham who has just returned from the campus. Cliff, what's the story at the moment on the campus?

05:21 – 05:43

CLIFF BINGHAM: Chuck, I went over to the Lyceum building, we couldn't get in for a long time. I understand, just in the last few minutes, they've allowed all the news people, in. But I went in with a Fox Movie Tone newsman in his car who seemed to have an, an open sesame to the grounds. I don't know how he managed that but he did.

05:44 – 06:07

We went to a building far removed from the Lyceum building where Meredith was with marshals. Marshals were around each corner of the building. There were marshals parading up and down the sidewalks, trying to make themselves as inconspicuous as possible because none of the students knew that he was in that building.

06:07 – 06:18

As a matter of fact, several car loads of students bringing their belongings, suits and clothes and suitcases into the building were moving in and they were not aware he was up on the second floor.

06:19 – 06:40

We saw the room that he was in and none of the other newsmen as of this moment, know where he is we came back to the Lyceum building, there were hundreds of students out in front of the building. The marshals are standing shoulder to shoulder all the way around the Lyceum building... but the students are playing havoc with the news photographers.

06:40 – 06:51

I stood up against one, I was right up against one fella when they tore the shirt off of his back, grabbed his camera and stomped it into the ground. An expensive camera. Looked like about a four or five hundred dollar camera.

06:51 – 07:03

They took an expensive tape recorder and did the same thing to it. I was standing there with my camera and one of the students he told me, You better get that camera out of sight. Well, that's exactly what I did.

07:03 – 07:16

ALLEN: Cliff would you, would you say that this 'near riot' as reported by NBC just moments ago and ah, and that, that you saw, would you say that this was provoked by the newsmen who were looking for pictures?

07:17 – 07:36

BINGHAM:

There was, no near riot as such. The, it's just goin' on constantly. There's just a small group of, I say a small group, there must be a couple a hundred in that group and they are milling around and ah, it seems that when, a photographer comes in, that just waves a red flag in front of them and they grab him and...

07:37 – 07:54

The photographer I was with made the mistake of going up and asking one of them if he could take his picture and they almost got him but he's a fast talker. That's this Movie Tone guy and he talked his way outta that and I've never seen a man get back to the car any faster with a camera unless it was me!

007:54 – 08:15

ALLEN:

[Laughs] Well, Cliff, we were up at the [Cliff coughs] lyceum building too about some, some 20 minutes ago when the first group of newsmen were allowed across the bridge here and we were there when a light went on, supposedly this gentleman was from CBS and he asked for...he wanted to take some pictures and he asked the students to to give him some action.

08:16 – 08:38

That they did waving a reb, a flag and with finger pointing and...Push him back! Push him back! cheers. They did push him back. They pushed him back to his car, he put his camera in the car. They grabbed the camera out of the car, they stomped in into the ground, to use your phrase, and then the car, the windows in the car were smashed.

08:39 – 08:46

It might be said that the sensationalism that some of the photographers are looking for is a contributing factor.

08:46 – 09:05

BINGHAM:

I would say that that's right, Chuck. These these guys are just looking for any kind of picture that will, make Mississippi look bad. I think that's their general purpose down here; some of them at least. I know that some of them that's what their purpose is and these boys know it and they're not bothering people that they know are from Mississippi.

09:05 – 09:18

As a matter of fact, this boy asked me where I was from and when I told him, he said, Well if I were you I'd get that camera on out of the way because these guys may not know who you are and they may get your camera before they, you can tell 'em who you are.

09:18 – 09:22

But I believe he said, if you tell 'em who you are, they wouldn't tear up your camera.

09:22 – 09:42

But it's quite a thing to see a group of students gather around one student as

he stamps on a camera and breaks it into smithereens and that's exactly what he did. Now this guy's car that who I told you I was standing by when they tore his shirt off, his car was also torn up.

09:43 – 09:46 Just torn to bits and all the glass is broken out of it

09:47 – 09:56
ALLEN: And the situation on the campus at the moment where James Meredith is in, in seclusion at the moment, though, is quiet at the time that you left?

09:56- 10:20
BINGHAM: It is quiet and we have the rumor as this place is full of rumors as I've ever seen any place, that there will be a press conference later on tonight. We have an idea that, it will be after President Kennedy's speech. The Chancellor, Williams, is supposed to speak to the group or was to speak at 7:30. I don't know if he has or not. It's now about ten minutes to eight and he hasn't.

10:21 – 10: 29 As I... have been able to find out. I don't think he has spoken to them yet but they've been announcing it for some time that he would speak to them at 7:30.

10:29 – 10:30
ALLEN: Speak to the newsmen?

10:30 – 10:34
BINGHAM: No, that he would speak to them over the campus radio station

10:34 – 11:00
ALLEN: Fine. Well, we've been trying to raise the campus radio station on our broadcast set [?] here but have been unable to do so but will continue to do it. As we speak to you, the traffic is at the normal as it's been all afternoon. The highway patrol men here at the university avenue entrance to the University of Mississippi campus here at Oxford, are still looking for identification cards of those people in cars, however...

11:00 – 11:26 The majority of people walking by do not seem to be accosted by patrol men and asked for identification cards. As I said some well, perhaps 40 minutes ago now when the newsmen were allowed on the first group were allowed on, to walk on, and we were fortunate to be in the van of that group and were, one of the first actually up at the Lyceum building itself.

11:27 – 11:33 At that moment as Cliff has told you, it's still apparent, the condom of...

11:33 – 11:40
TECHNICIAN: Chuck! We're gonna have to interrupt you because if we don't get the air,

on this, get this on the air now [unintelligible] speech.

11:40 – 11:41

ALLEN: Go ahead.

11:41 – 11:54 [Dead noise]

11:54 – 12:00

TECHNICIAN: Chuck I said we had to interrupt you because if we don't get it on the air, we run into the Presidents' speech

12:01 – 12:02

ALLEN: That's okay. Go right ahead.

12:02 – 12:09 [Dead noise]

END OF RECORDING